

Supporting Family History Researchers through Online Communities

by Michael Ritchey




FAMILYSEARCH™
WHERE GENERATIONS MEET

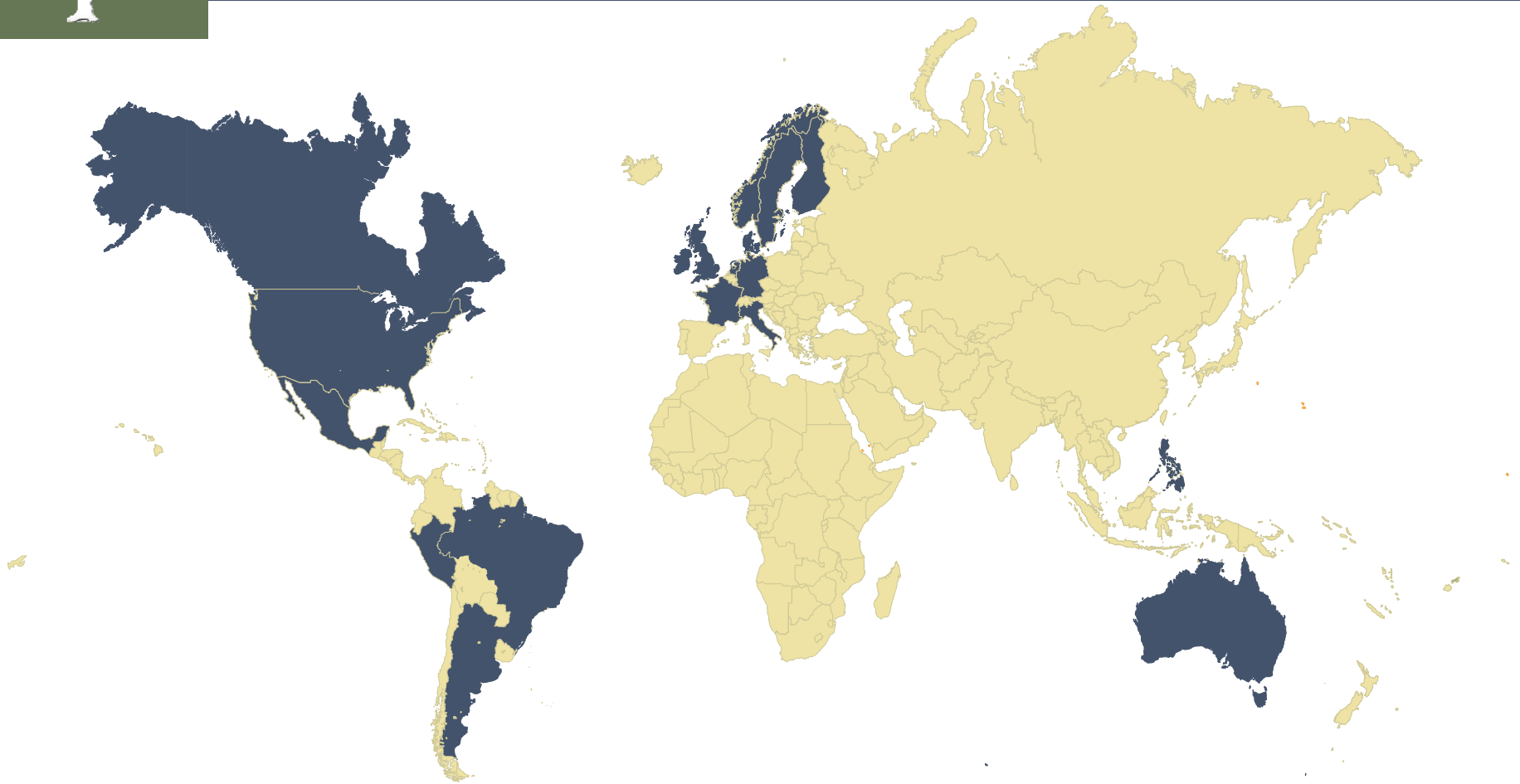


What we'll cover today

- ❖ Challenges in answering research questions
- ❖ Realization: Need a new paradigm
- ❖ Case study: The power of communities
- ❖ Introspection: Our organization's strengths
- ❖ Leveraging our strengths
- ❖ A new tool for you today



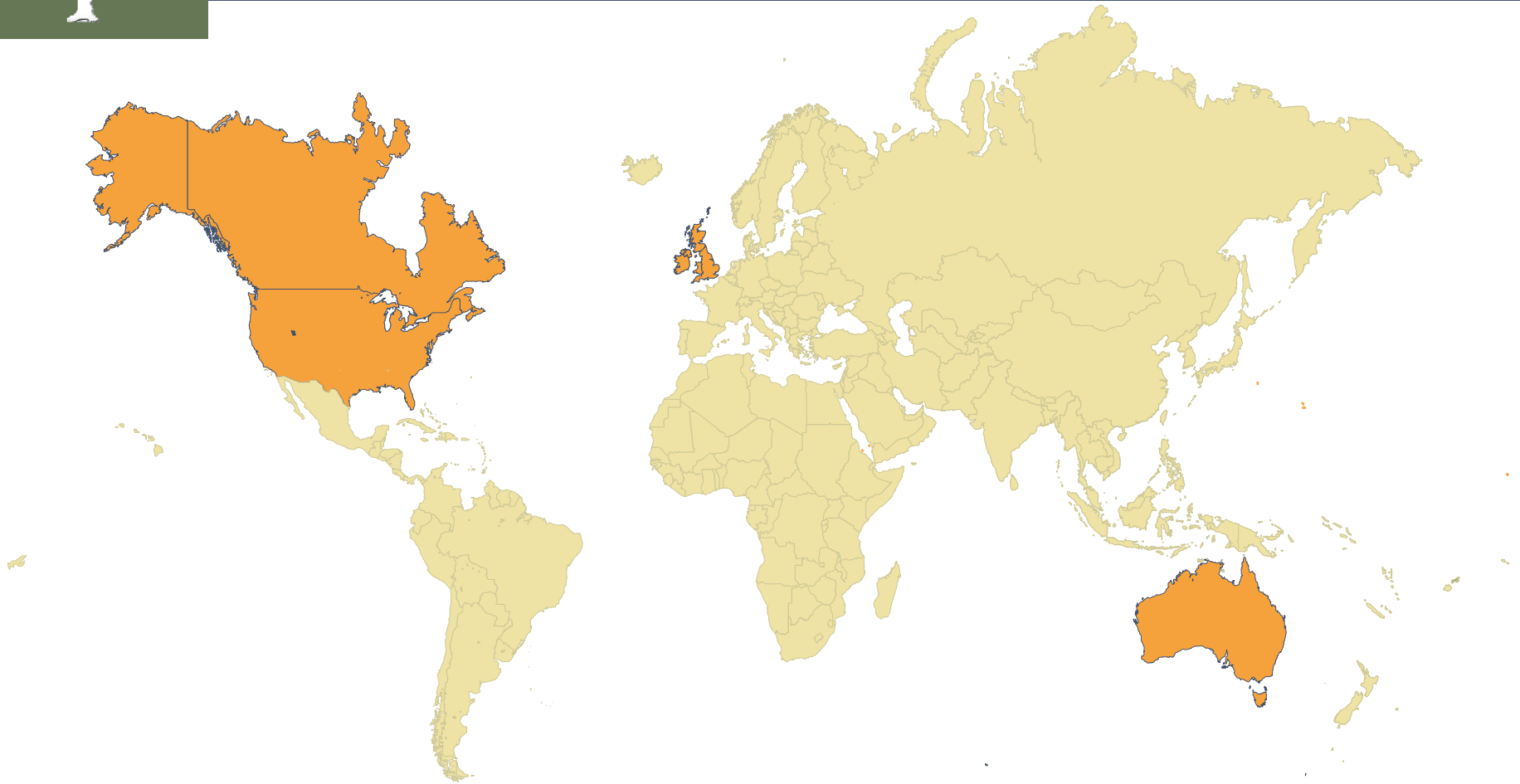
Challenge: cover more places



■ Research content on FamilySearch Internet



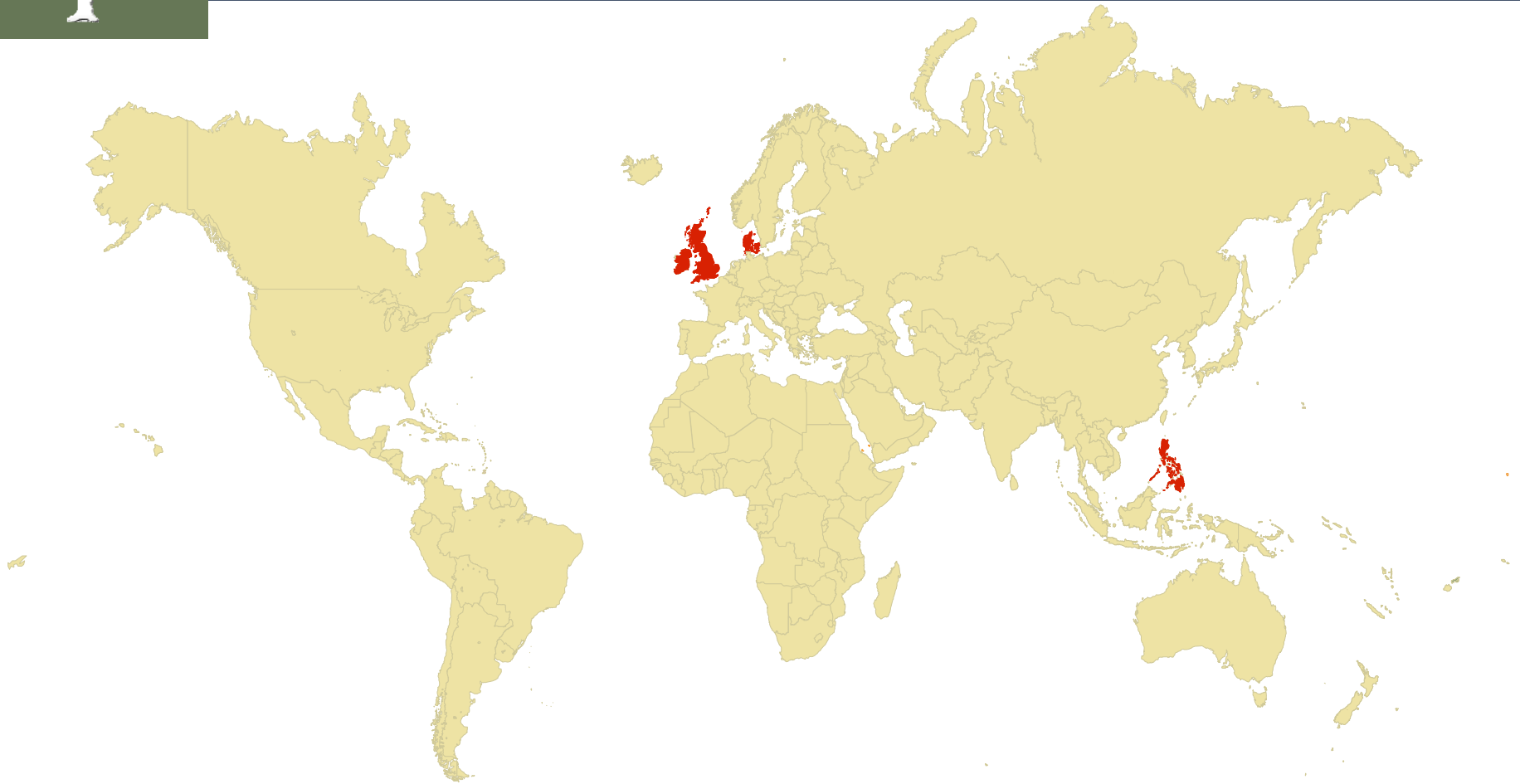
Challenge: cover more languages



- FamilySearch Internet: Research content about countries in their native language



Challenge: Update content



■ FamilySearch Internet: Research content less than 5 yrs. old



Challenge: recruit more missionaries





Challenge: Identify records worldwide

Page No. 171
Supervisor's Dist. No. _____
Enumeration Dist. No. _____

SCHEDULE _____ during the Year ending May 31, _____
_____, State of NY

Manuscript
[7-222.]

Note A.—The Census Year begins June 1, 1879, and ends May 31, 1880.
Note B.—In making entries in columns 6, 7, and 8, an affirmative mark only in case of Divorced persons, column 8, when the letter "D" is entered.
Note C.—For instructions relative to the entries in column 14, see back of this form.
Note D.—In column 17, note distinctly if no physician was in attendance.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.
Name of the person deceased.		Age at last birthday	Sex	Color	Married	Single	Widowed	Place of birth of this person, naming the State or Territory of the U. S., or the country, if of foreign birth.	Where was the Father of this person born? (As in column 9.)	Where was the Mother of this person born? (As in column 9.)	Occupation	How long a resident of this place (If less than 1 year, state fraction.)	Place of death	How long a resident of this place (If less than 1 year, state fraction.)	Name of attending Physician.	
1.	Peters	1/24	M	W				ny	ny	ny	may	Prescriptions	7 E 49	J. H. Burchard		
2.	Schmidt, Elizabeth	33	"	"				Germany	Germany			Puerperal fever	35 E 116	J. H. Elliot		
3.	Loebel, Annie W.	2	"	"				"	"			Scarlatina Diphtheria	35 E 116	W. Krause		
4.	Hill, Mary	59	"	"				Ireland	Ireland			Cirrhosis of liver	38 E 38	J. D. Campbell		
5.	Knodel, Edward	26	M	"				Germany	Germany			Phthisis Pulmon		J. H. Riegel		
6.	Rabner, Max	1/30	"	"				Russ Poland	ny			Const.		M. Ellinger		
7.	Mordant, Charles	1	"	"							Foundling	Chrys. pneumonia		J. H. Chadbourne		
8.	Nollen, Kate	1	F	"								Whooping Cough		"		
9.	McLean, Catherine	70	"	"				Ireland	Ireland			Medicinal Cap. Bronchitis		"		
10.	Luice, Ellen	37	"	"				ny	"			U. C. Pneumonia	326 E 40	Burke		
11.	Boyd, Ellen	50	"	"				"	"			Acute chronic Swallowing	303 E 109	C. J. Smith		
12.	Kossmark, Emma		"	"				"	"			Acute chronic Swallowing		J. O. McCoy		
13.	Warten, Charles		"	"				"	"			Acute chronic Swallowing		J. O. McCoy		
14.	Wegner, Frederic		"	"				"	"			Acute chronic Swallowing		J. O. McCoy		
15.	Williams, John	100	"	"				Sweden	Sweden			Acute chronic Swallowing		J. O. McCoy		

Many places to cover!



Challenge: Consultants need local lessons



Many places to cover!



Challenge: Make content easy to find



WHERE
GENERATIONS
MEET

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Ancestors](#)[Research
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Helps](#)[Web
Sites](#)[Family History
Library Catalog](#)

Hi! I'm your research

assistant. My job is to help you locate records that may contain information about your ancestors.

Select a place where your ancestor was born, christened, married, or died. If you are not sure of the country, click on [Determining the Country Where Your Ancestor Lived](#). Only places that research guides have been created for are listed.

If you are just starting your research, you may want to read [How Do I Begin](#).

RESEARCH GUIDANCE

Select a Place

Select a country, state, or province from the list below:

1	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

A

[Alabama, United States](#)[Alaska, United States](#)[Alberta, Canada](#)[Arizona, United States](#)[Arkansas, United States](#)[Return to top of page](#)

B

[Baden, Germany](#)[Bayern, Germany](#)

Headquarters can't
do it alone

How can we do it
better?



Our Strengths as an Organization

- ❖ Most knowledgeable genealogical staff





Our Strengths as an Organization

- ❖ Most knowledgeable genealogical staff
- ❖ Largest volunteer base (30,000+)





Our Strengths as an Organization

- ❖ Most knowledgeable genealogical staff
- ❖ Largest volunteer base (30,000+)
- ❖ Most locations (4,500 FHCs)





Our Strengths as an Organization

- ❖ Most knowledgeable genealogical staff
- ❖ Largest volunteer base (30,000+)
- ❖ Most locations (4,500 FHCs)
- ❖ Best record collection



Solution:
Community



Wikipedia: Community authoring



WIKIPEDIA
The Free Encyclopedia

navigation

- [Main page](#)
- [Community portal](#)
- [Featured content](#)
- [Current events](#)
- [Recent changes](#)
- [Random article](#)
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toolbox

- [What links here](#)
- [Related changes](#)
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in other languages

- العربية

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the free encyclopedia that *anyone* can edit.

1,591,186 articles in English

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- [Society](#)
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[Contents](#) · [Categories](#) · [Featured content](#) · [A–Z index](#)

Today's featured article



El Greco was a prominent painter, sculptor and architect of the [Spanish Renaissance](#). El Greco was born in [Crete](#), which was at that time part of the [Republic of Venice](#), and at 26 travelled to [Venice](#) to study. In 1570 he moved to [Rome](#), where he opened a workshop and executed a series of works. During his stay in [Italy](#), El Greco enriched his style with elements

of [Mannerism](#) and of the [Venetian Renaissance](#). In 1577 he emigrated to [Toledo, Spain](#), where he lived and worked until his death. In Toledo El Greco received several major commissions and produced his best known paintings. El Greco's dramatic and expressionistic style was met with puzzlement by his contemporaries but found appreciation in the [20th century](#). El Greco is regarded as a precursor of both [Expressionism](#) and [Cubism](#), while his personality and works were a source of inspiration for poets and writers such as [Rainer Maria Rilke](#) and [Nikos Kazantzakis](#). El Greco has been characterized by modern scholars as an artist so individual that he belongs to no conventional school. He is best known for

In the news

- **Hrant Dink**, an Armenian-Turkish writer, is shot dead in [Istanbul](#). Dink was convicted in 2005 for 'insulting Turkishness' by writing an article on the [Armenian Genocide](#).
- European windstorm **Kyrill** hits several countries across Europe, killing at least thirty-three people.
- Allegedly racist comments toward Indian contestant **Shilpa Shetty** on the British television programme **Celebrity Big Brother** spark protests in India and rebuke from Indian and British officials.
- German conservative **Hans-Gert Pöttering** is elected the new President of the European Parliament.
- Saddam Hussein's half-brother **Barzan Ibrahim** (pictured) and Iraq's former chief judge **Awad Hamed al-Bandar** are executed by hanging for their role in the





Wikipedia: Community Authoring

A screenshot of the Wikipedia homepage. The page features a navigation bar at the top with links to 'main page', 'discussion', 'view source', and 'history'. Below this is a yellow banner with a thank you message from the Wikimedia Foundation. The main content area includes a 'Welcome to Wikipedia' message, a list of featured content, and a grid of portal links for various topics like Arts, History, Society, etc. On the left side, there is a 'navigation' section with links to 'Main page', 'Community portal', 'Featured content', etc., and a 'search' section with a search box and 'Go' and 'Search' buttons. At the bottom, there is a 'toolbox' section with links to 'What links here', 'Related changes', 'Upload file', etc., and a section for 'other languages' with a link to 'العربية'. The page also displays a list of recent changes and a list of featured content items, including a mention of Hans-Gert Pöttering and Saddam Hussein's half-brother Barzan Ibrahim.

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main page discussion view source history

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the free encyclopedia that anyone can edit.
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Biography Mathematics Technology
Geography Science All portals

Featured content • A–Z index

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from Indian and British officials.

- German conservative **Hans-Gert Pöttering** is elected the new President of the European Parliament.
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Done

- ❖ 9th most popular Website
- ❖ Content written by community
- ❖ 3,000 new entries per day
- ❖ Most errors corrected in 5 mins.
- ❖ 11 edits per article



How to Leverage our Strengths

❖ Shorten the publishing cycle...

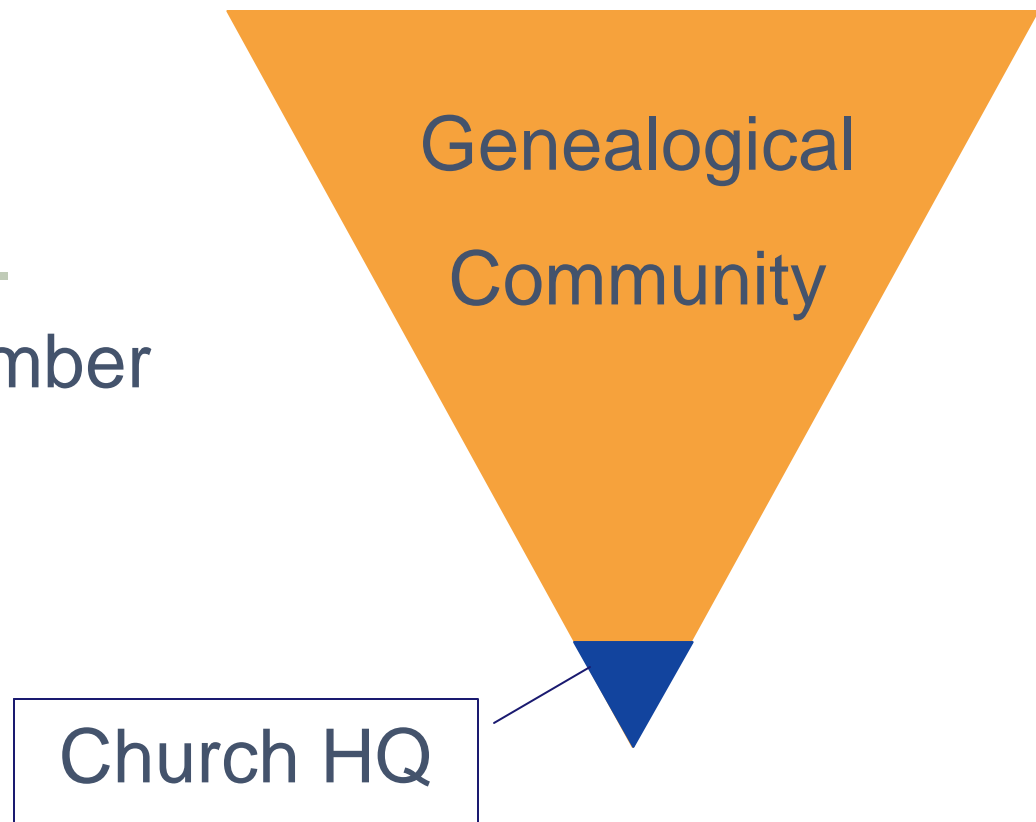
...from months to minutes.





How to Leverage our Strengths

- ❖ Shorten the publishing cycle.
- ❖ Increase the number of authors.





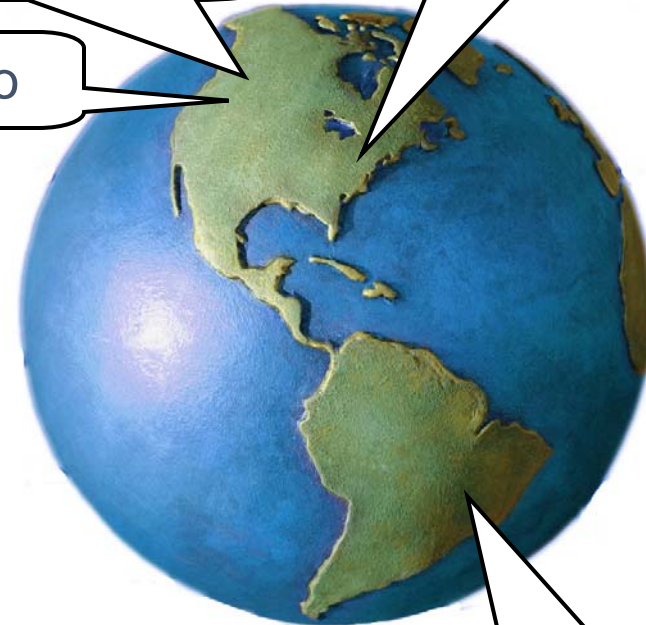
How to Leverage our Strengths

- ❖ Shorten the publishing cycle.
- ❖ Increase the number of authors.
- ❖ Boost communication between customers and experts.

How do I find birth records from Brazil?

I dunno

Sounds tough!



No problem!
Try this...



FamilySearch Wiki is born



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[Search](#)

[Michael Ritchey](#) [My Folder](#) [Preferences](#) [Undo](#) [Log out](#)

Navigation

- [Home](#)
- [Discussion Groups](#)
- [Browse by Country](#)
- [FamilySearch Wiki Home](#)
- [How to Use This Site](#)
- [Recent Changes](#)
- [Contact Us](#)

[Contents](#) [View](#) [Edit](#) [Properties](#) [Sharing](#)

[Translate into](#) [Display](#) [Add to folder](#) [State: locked](#)

Welcome! You are now logged in.

FamilySearch Wiki Home

by [Michael Ritchey](#) — last modified 2007-06-26 19:21 [History](#)



Site Features

- **Search.** You can use the search engine to find articles on how to do genealogy research. To learn how to search effectively, [read on...](#)
- **Ask an Expert.** Get answers to your genealogy questions by connecting with other people on our [forums](#).
- **Contribute!** You can help others by adding content to this site. To learn how, [read on...](#)
- **Access content in your language.** FamilySearch Wiki allows you to view or contribute content in your choice of 8 languages. [Read on...](#)
- **Training.** Learn how to use FamilySearch Wiki. [Click here to select a tutorial.](#)

[Add Comment](#)

Find Research Advice by Place

- [United States](#)
- [England](#)
- [Scotland](#)
- [Canada](#)
- [More...](#)

News

[More Web Site Service Providers Team with FamilySearch](#)
2007-05-25

[American Genealogical Biographical Index Slated for Free Access at Family History Centers](#)
2007-05-20

[More news...](#)

Staging information

Status: current version

[All versions...](#)

My Favorites

Root folder contents
Michael's opening and signature

Demo



Important Messages

- ❖ Familysearch Wiki is a prototype.
- ❖ Professional designers have not worked on this – we want your feedback.
- ❖ Limited server bandwidth.



Authoring Content

- ❖ What kinds of information can I contribute?
 - Research advice: location of records and how to search them.
 - Write “stub articles” & iterate: “Perfect comes too late”
- ❖ What kinds of publications can’t I contribute?
 - How to use FamilySearch products.
 - Data on a specific ancestor.
- ❖ Templates
 - Design team is working on templates.
 - Don’t wait for us! Publish now!



Conclusion about Research Support

- ❖ The job is too big for headquarters alone.
- ❖ We have a powerful volunteer community.
- ❖ Succeed by involving the community.
- ❖ New product today.
 - Multilingual
 - Easy to search
 - Authoring & updating is easy
 - Expert communities



Spread the Word!

Family history consultants:

Visit us at www.FamilySearchWiki.org